

FILED

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IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

U.S. DISTRICT COURT
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF OHIO
CLEVELAND

FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF OHIO

EASTERN DIVISION

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Plaintiff,

v.

BASHEERA PATRICIA PERRY,

Defendant.

INFORMATION

CASE NO.

1:18 CR 357

JUDGE

JUDGE NUGENT

Title 18, Sections 1028A(a)(1), 1341, 1343,
1349, and 2, United States Code

General Allegations

At all times material and relevant to this Information:

1. Under the authority of Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulations ("CFR"), Part 600, the United States Department of Education (the "USDOE") administered federal Student Financial Assistance ("SFA") programs that provided money for college to eligible students who attended participating post-secondary schools.

2. To receive SFA, students were required to complete a Free Application for Federal Student Aid ("FAFSA"). The FAFSA required students to provide their personal information including names, social security numbers, dates of birth and addresses. The FAFSA also required students to state whether they possessed a high school diploma or general educational development certificate ("GED"), and to provide their adjusted gross income for the prior taxable year. The student could mail the FAFSA to a USDOE processing center or transmit

it electronically via the Internet. Most FAFSAs were completed online, and as such, were electronically submitted to the USDOE processing center in Plano, Texas.

3. At all times relevant to this Information, individuals who had previously defaulted on federal student financial aid repayments and remained in default status were not eligible to receive federal SFA, including federal Pell grants and federal student loans. Likewise, individuals who did not have a high school diploma or its recognized equivalent (“GED”), did not maintain satisfactory academic progress in his or her course of study, or were incarcerated in a federal or state penal institution, were not eligible to receive SFA.

4. The amount of SFA that a student could receive was based on the total Cost of Attendance (“COA”) at participating post-secondary colleges or universities. The COA included tuition and fees, on-campus room and board (or a housing and food allowance for off-campus students), allowances for books, supplies, transportation, and loan fees. USDOE distributed SFA funds to a student’s college for tuition and other educational related expenses. The college withheld the cost of tuition and other fees. Often, when there were funds remaining after the expenses and fees were paid to an institution, the student was entitled to receive those remaining funds to cover the student’s cost of living expenses while enrolled in college. In such cases, the college disbursed the remaining funds to the student, which was called a “financial aid student refund.”

5. Financial aid student refunds were disbursed to students in one of two ways: (a) an electronic transfer to a debit card issued in the student’s name; or (b) a refund check issued to the student by the college. Debit cards and refund checks were typically mailed to the student.

6. BASHEERA PATRICIA PERRY was a resident of Euclid, Ohio, located in the Northern District of Ohio, Eastern Division.

7. Lakeland Community College was a post-secondary college located in Kirtland, Ohio, within the Northern District of Ohio.

8. Owens Community College was a post-secondary college located in Perrysburg, Ohio, within the Northern District of Ohio.

9. Stark State was a post-secondary college located in North Canton, Ohio, within the Northern District of Ohio.

10. Lorain County Community College was a post-secondary college located in Elyria, Ohio, within the Northern District of Ohio.

COUNT 1

(Conspiracy to Commit Wire Fraud, 18 U.S.C. § 1343, and Mail Fraud, 18 U.S.C. § 1341, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1349)

The United States Attorney charges:

11. Paragraphs 1 through 10 of this Information are re-alleged and incorporated by reference as if fully set forth herein.

12. From in or around December 2009, and continuing through in or around March 2017, in the Northern District of Ohio, Eastern Division, and elsewhere, BASHEERA PATRICIA PERRY, and others known and unknown to the United States Attorney, did knowingly and voluntarily combine, conspire, confederate, and agree together and with each other to commit offenses against the United States of America, that is, to devise and intend to devise a scheme and artifice to defraud the Department of Education and to obtain money and property from the Department of Education by means of false and fraudulent pretenses, representations, and promises, and for the purpose of executing and attempting to execute the scheme and artifice to defraud:

- a. caused to be transmitted by means of wire communication in interstate commerce, writings, signs, signals, pictures and sounds, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1343; and
- b. placed, or caused to be placed, in any depository for mail matter, any matter or thing to be sent or delivered by the Postal Service, and took or received from the Postal Service, any such matter or thing delivered by the Postal Service, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1341.

OBJECT OF THE CONSPIRACY

13. The object of the conspiracy was to obtain money and funds from the Department of Education to which the Defendant and other recipients were neither eligible to receive, nor entitled to receive, in order to pay for their living expenses, other personal expenditures, and costs associated with attending various colleges located in the Northern District of Ohio, and elsewhere, including Lakeland Community College, Owens Community College, Stark State College, and Lorain County Community College.

MANNER AND MEANS

14. It was part of the conspiracy that Defendant, and others known and unknown to the United States Attorney, recruited persons and obtained the personal identifying information (“PII”) of other individuals, which was used to apply for and obtain college admissions.

15. It was further part of the conspiracy that Defendant, and others known and unknown to the United States Attorney, used the PII of other individuals to apply for and obtain SFA, including loans, Pell grants, and federal supplementary educational opportunity grants (“FSEOG”), by submitting fraudulent FAFSAs, for which the applicant was unqualified and

ineligible. The applications contained false and fraudulent pretenses and representations concerning the students' eligibility for SFA, including their status as regular students.

16. It was further part of the conspiracy that Defendant, and others known and unknown to the United States Attorney, did not use the SFA funds for educational or school-related purposes but instead split the proceeds of the money fraudulently obtained as a result of the false and fraudulent student financial aid applications.

17. It was further part of the conspiracy that Defendant, and others known and unknown to the United States Attorney, arranged for some of the academic coursework of the recruited persons to be completed online by Defendant and other persons to make it appear that the recruits were regular students so that the SFA would be transferred from the USDOE to the colleges and, in turn, the SFA refunds would be disbursed via bank debit cards or checks sent to addresses or bank accounts controlled by the defendant.

18. It was further part of the conspiracy that beginning in or around December 2009, through in or around March 2017, Defendant completed and fraudulently submitted FAFSA transactions in the names of D.A., S.S., J.S., H.L., among others, for the purpose of obtaining federal SFA to which she knew said individuals were not entitled. The FAFSA transactions for said individuals included false addresses, false email addresses, and other false representations concerning the recruited student's eligibility for financial aid. As a result, PERRY and said individuals fraudulently obtained SFA funds, including loans, FSEOG, and Pell grants, to which the recruited students were not otherwise eligible.

19. It was further part of the conspiracy that BASHEERA PATRICIA PERRY and others arranged for some or all of the coursework of the recruited students to be completed online by PERRY and other persons, to make it appear that the recruits were regular students, so that the SFA would be transferred from the Department of Education to the colleges and, in turn, student refunds for excess amounts of SFA would be disbursed via bank debit cards or by refund checks sent via the Postal Service to addresses and/or bank accounts controlled by PERRY.

20. It was further part of the conspiracy that BASHEERA PATRICIA PERRY created fraudulent GED certificates and high school diploma transcripts so that the recruited students appeared eligible for SFA.

21. It was further part of the conspiracy that BASHEERA PATRICIA PERRY created fraudulent documents, including death certificates, medical records, and police reports, for use in academic appeals processes if the recruited students received notification of lack of satisfactory academic progress in order to be eligible to continue to receive SFA.

22. It was further part of the conspiracy that BASHEERA PATRICIA PERRY, and others working at her direction, transported the recruited students to various locations within the Northern District of Ohio to cash the financial aid refund checks, the proceeds from which were split between PERRY and the recruited students.

23. As a result of the foregoing conspiracy and fraudulent conduct, the Department of Education was defrauded and sustained a total loss of more than \$1.8 million.

All in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1349.

COUNTS 2-5

(Wire Fraud, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1343)

The United States Attorney further charges:

24. The factual allegations of paragraphs 1 through 10 and 13 through 22 of this Information are re-alleged and incorporated by reference as if fully set forth herein.

25. Beginning in or around December 2009, through in or around March 2017, in the Northern District of Ohio, Eastern Division, and elsewhere, Defendant BASHEERA PATRICIA PERRY, and others known and unknown to the United States Attorney, devised and intended to devise a scheme and artifice to defraud and to obtain money from the USDOE by false and fraudulent pretenses, representations, and promises.

26. From in or around December 2009, through in or around March 2017, in the Northern District of Ohio, Eastern Division, and elsewhere, Defendant for the purpose of executing and attempting to execute the scheme and artifice to defraud described above, caused to be transmitted by means of wire communication in interstate commerce, writings, signs, signals, pictures and sounds, to wit: FAFSAs filed for recruited persons using a fraudulently obtained identity, by means of an online application, transmitted from the Northern District of Ohio, with the recipient being the USDOE contractor in Plano, Texas, including the following transmissions, each representing a separate count of this Information:

Count	Date	Description	Type/ Location	Recipient / Location
2	3/19/2015	2015-2016 FAFSA filed for S.S.	Online application Euclid, Ohio	U.S. Department of Education contractor in Plano, Texas
3	4/6/2016	2016-2017 FAFSA filed for J.S.	Online application Euclid, Ohio	U.S. Department of Education contractor in Plano, Texas
4	3/19/2015	2015-2016 FAFSA filed for H.L.	Online application Euclid, Ohio	U.S. Department of Education contractor in Plano, Texas

5	3/19/2016	2016-2017 FAFSA filed for S.E.	Online application Euclid, Ohio	U.S. Department of Education contractor in Plano, Texas
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All in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1343.

COUNTS 6-9

(Mail Fraud, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1341)

The United States Attorney further charges:

27. The factual allegations of paragraphs 1 through 10 and 13 through 25 of this Information are re-alleged and incorporated by reference as if fully set forth herein.

28. Beginning in or around December 2009, through in or around March 2017, in the Northern District of Ohio, Eastern Division, and elsewhere, Defendant BASHEERA PATRICIA PERRY, and others known and unknown to the United States Attorney, devised and intended to devise a scheme and artifice to defraud and to obtain money by false and fraudulent pretenses, representations, and promises.

29. From in or about February 2010, through in or around March 2017, in the Northern District of Ohio, Eastern Division, and elsewhere, Defendant BASHEERA PATRICIA PERRY, for the purpose of executing and attempting to execute the scheme and artifice to defraud described above, placed, or caused to be placed, in any depository for mail matter, any matter or thing to be sent or delivered by the Postal Service, and took or received from the Postal Service, any such matter or thing delivered by the Postal Service, including the following mailings, each representing a separate count of this Information:

Count	Date	Description	Mailed by	Check Payee
6	9/5/2014	SFA refund check # 60099947 in the amount \$4,330.55.	Lakeland CC	S.S.
7	6/25/2015	SFA refund check # 60103026 in the amount of \$3,134.00	Lakeland CC	S.S
8	9/10/2015	SFA refund check # 60104243 in the amount of \$4,452.55	Lakeland CC	H.L.
9	6/23/2016	SFA refund check # 773102561 in the amount of \$814.80.	Higher One/Stark State College	J.S.

All in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1341.

COUNT 10

(Aggravated Identity Theft, in violation of 18 U.S.C. §§ 1028A(a)(1) and 2)

The United States Attorney further charges:

30. Between in or around 2013 and continuing until in or around May 2017, in the Northern District of Ohio, Eastern Division, and elsewhere, Defendant BASHEERA PATRICIA PERRY during and in relation to felony violations of Title 18, United States Code, § 1341 and §1343, knowingly transferred, possessed and used, without lawful authority, a means of identification of one or more other individuals to wit: J.S., and knowingly aided and abetted the transfer, possession and use without lawful authority, of the means of identification of another actual person, knowing that said means of identification belonged to one or more other persons.

In violation of Title 18, United States Code, Sections 1028A(a)(1) and 2.

COUNT 11

(Theft of Government Property, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 641)

The United States Attorney further charges:

31. From in or around March 2012, and continuing until in or around May 2017, in the Northern District of Ohio, Eastern Division, BASHEERA PATRICIA PERRY, in a continuing course of conduct, did willfully and knowingly steal, purloin, and convert to her own

use, property of the United States exceeding \$1,000 in value belonging to the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development, an agency of the United States, to wit: Project-Based Voucher Program housing benefits in the amount of approximately \$32,235.75.

In violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 641.

FORFEITURE

The United States Attorney further charges:

32. For the purpose of alleging forfeiture pursuant to Title 18, United States Code, Section 981(a)(1)(C) and Title 28 United States Code, Section 2461(c), the allegations of Counts 1 through 11 are incorporated herein by reference. As a result of the foregoing offenses, BASHERA PATRICIA PERRY, the defendant herein, shall forfeit to the United States any property real or personal, which constitutes or is derived from proceeds traceable to a violation of the charges set forth herein; including, but not limited to, the following property:

- a. \$3,210.00 in U.S. Currency; and
- b. Joe Rodeo Junior Watch seized on March 9, 2017.

JUSTIN E. HERDMAN
UNITED STATES ATTORNEY

By: _____

EDWARD F. FERAN, Chief
General Crimes Unit